in the coastal water. They were also advised to submit an Environmental Management Plan with regard to mining activities. The Ministry is constantly following up the matter with the mining authorities for the Environmental Management Plan.

Ban on use of wood in Government Construction

1050. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have imposed ban on use of wood in Government constructions;

(b) if so, since when; and

(c) whether Government would also consider banning of wooden furniture in the Departments and see that metalic and plastic material will be used to conserve trees ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Central Public Works Department has taken a decision that no timber shall be used in C.P.W.D. works being started from 1-4-93. However, in respect of any prestigious work where use of timber is unaviodable, prior permission of Director General (Works) would be required.

(c) It is not practically feasible to ban copmpletely the use of wocden furnitures in the Government Departments, however, it has been decided that all Government Offices, autonomous organisations and public sector undertakings should discourage purchase of wooden furniture to the maximum extent.

Conservation of Biodiversity

1051. SHRI BISHAMBER NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the conservation of biodiversity has acquired unprecedented importance recently;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what measures Government have adopted to conserve the biodiversity ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Conservation of biological diversity (biodiversity) has received special importance worldwide in the wake of the intergovernmental negotiations culminating in the signing of the Convention on Biodiversity by 160 countries during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June 1992 at Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

(c) The measures taken for the conservation of biodiversity in India include :

i. Legislation such as the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 supported by different State laws, regulations, etc.

ii. Policy framework through the National Wildlife Action Plan (1973), the National Forest Policy (1988), and the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development (1992).

iii. Regulation of trade & commerce of the wild fauna and flora.

iv. Scientific surveys through the Botanical Survey of India, zoological Survey of India and Forest Survey of India.

v. Establishment of a network of National Parks, Sanctuaries and other protected areas covering about 4% of the land area of the country.

vi. Special projects for the conservation of endangered species like the Project Tiger, Crocodile Project, Project Elephant, etc.

vii. Special programmes on Biosphere Reserves, Mangroves, Wetlands, Coral Reefs, etc.

viii. Establishment of Botanic Gardens, Preservation Plots, and Zoos and, more recently, the setting up of the Central Zoo Authority.

ix. Greater focus on forest conservation and management.

x. Ex-situ conservation of genetic resources through the National Bureaus of Plant, Animal and Fish Genetic Resources under the ICAR system.

xi. Development and application of biotechnology through programmes and activities of the Department of Biotechnology.

xii. Research and training through Universities and Research Institutions such as the Wild life Institute of India, G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India, etc.

xiii. Education and awareness activities for promoting conservation of biodiversity.

xiv. Participation in major Conventions and Treaties like Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (1976), Ramsar Convention (1982), Basel Convention (1989), Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1983), Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1981), Antarctic Treaty (1983), Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), Convention on Climate Change (1992) and Convention on Biological Diversity (1992).

xv. Following the signing of the Convention on Biological Diversity, action has also been initiated aimed at consolidating and strengthening the on going programmes and activities in consultation with the concerned government and non-governmental agencies/ organisations as well as experts.

Ozone Depletion

1052. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country's refrigeration industry and environment group have shown little interest in taking steps to phase out the use of ozone-depleting Chlorafluorocarbons (CFCS), if so the reasons therefor;

(b) the number of proposals that have been received by Government so far from CFC users for funding to prepare plans for phasing out CPCs which are widely used as coolants in